

# **angles**

WOMEN WORKING IN FILM & VIDEO

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"You take a film or video  
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a lot of people who want to  
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media

**Zeinabu irene Davis**

filmmaker and teacher

very, very mysterious. They  
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# New voices

A recent article in the Chicago Tribune focused on "new Black voices in filmmaking" — Spike Lee, Robert Townsend, John Singleton, Ernest Dickerson, Mario Van Peebles and Matty Rich. What happened to Julie Dash, Euzhan Palcy, Zeinabu irene Davis, Michelle Parkerson, Camille Billops, Daresha Kyi and many other African-American women who are creating new works?

Davis, who just released her feature film, "A Powerful Thang," was interviewed for the article, and expressed concern that the term Black voices seems to mean Black male voices.

"I don't particularly care for the existing situation. You have young Black males, who are getting a lot of media attention and who don't have a lot of worldly experience. They're pretty much defining this narrow genre of Black filmmaking — what I call the 'homeboy aesthetic.' People tell me they're tired of seeing young Black males getting shot up and calling women 'ho's and being otherwise disrespectful."

Davis offers a more expansive vision of the Black aesthetic in an interview with writer Ann Filemyr (Page 6). And she talks about the importance of teaching film- and video-making to people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds instead of making it a "mysterious process" to which only an elite few have access.

If you're wondering where you can see Davis' work and the work of other African-American women, the upcoming Women in the Director's Chair Film and Video Festival (March 5-8) is a good place to start. The festival will feature a special program, Black Mosaic, of works by African-American women. Several film and video makers will attend and participate in panel discussions (Page 12).

Maria Benfield is dedicated to presenting multicultural programming on the Chicago Access series, "Feed Back." It's subculture with a vengeance, writes Benfield (Page 3). "Our intent is that the works presented in 'Feed Back' will help form the bonds of community between all who are left out, walked over, economically exploited and ethically stampeded by dominant media culture."

## angles

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Angles recognizes the innovative and important contribution women have made and continue to make in the field of film and video. We are committed to bringing readers information and news about the diverse body of work being created by women from all ethnic, cultural and socio/economic backgrounds. We cover women working in film and video at all levels — from directing to producing to distributing, exhibiting and programming.

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*"We are not interested in being a reflection of, or being acceptable to, mainstream media and its diehard constituents"*

## 'Feed Back' stimulates alternative visions

BY MARIA BENFIELD

Reprinted from Video, the Center for New Television Newsletter

*"Feed Back" is the title of a series of hourlong programs of independent media cablecast on Chicago Access Corporation's Channel 19. The programs appeared on Fridays at 10 p.m., beginning May 3, 1991. The series is a joint venture of The Center for New Television and NAME. As one of the two women responsible for the program up to this point, with Natalie Frutig of the Center for New Television being the other party, I was asked to write a small piece for Video regarding our programming philosophy — a manifesto of sorts. What follows then, is a series of statements intended to rile people up about "Feed Back." Keep in mind this is a club you can join.*

"Feed Back" is most importantly subcultural with a vengeance. It is a program consisting of media produced by representatives of so-called subcultures. Those groups include people of color, queers and feminists who identify themselves or who are identified as outside of mainstream culture. (Of course, the perspective from within these positions identifies mainstream culture as "outsider" culture.)

Our intent is that the works presented in "Feed Back" will help form the bonds of community between all who are left out, walked over, economically exploited and ethically stampeded by dominant media culture. This commitment is contingent on the idea that media plays an essential role in disseminating world-views and that shared experience results in the creation of community. It believes in the continuing formation of "communities" of people in Chicago whose shared economic, cultural or ethical interests do not coincide with the mainstream. "Feed Back" hopes to affirm and stimulate the alternative visions of its viewers. Of course tapes alone don't change the world — a fact which media makers, including myself, sometimes forget. However, media can be both a reflection and a catalyst. By supporting the free-flow of fresh ideas, "Feed Back" wants to support viewers' active engagement in forming diverse conceptions of the world.

"Feed Back" is multicultural. Speaking for myself, this means we are interested in presenting work which is beyond the pale (and I mean pale) of mainstream media. My definition differs from the one widely in use of late. Multicultural, in the now accepted terminology seems to be expressed by this equation:

ANGLO + africanamericanlatinoanativeamerican-queeramericanasianamericanmiddleeasternamerican-feministamericanradicalartists, ETC., ETC. = Multicultural.

That this equation is based on a serious imbalance has not been acknowledged by anyone using the term, as far as I know. Multicultural means "THIS and..(other)" for most cultural institutions. As a Latina woman in recovery from assimilation, my emphasis is firmly on the rich complexity and wide variety of "other." (Of course, easier said than done, for as all of us recovering assimilateds know, we have sucked it up like sponges and are gonna be squeezing it out forever.) My usage of the term "multicultural" to describe "Feed Back" implies that it is a collection of work devoted to "other" representations. The work we present is about, and is hopefully made by, folks who are not represented in or by mainstream media. The content will be made up of all those truly diverse and complex realities which are hidden from us by the opaque gloss of mainstream media.

This commitment to alternative content necessarily entails a commitment to formal innovation. Formally, we are not interested in being a reflection of, or being acceptable to, mainstream media and its diehard constituents. If you want to watch 30-second spots, watch every other channel on the dial, not 19 at 10 p.m. on Fridays. Most importantly, we will not cut work to size and slice and dice your videotapes. If your tape has rough edges, we will not smooth them out. We will let every bump and hump hang out in all its paradoxical splendor. "Broadcast Quality" means, for us, brutal

*Continued on page 23*



*Greycat Films takes  
on projects others  
see as problems*

## Distributors find 'Gold' in unconventional story

BY HARRIET ROBBINS

Distributors Suzanne and David Whitten, who operate Greycat Films in Las Vegas, are willing to take a gamble when it comes to distributing films. But it is more than luck that enables them to pick up works that are passed over by major Hollywood companies and find a niche for them. It's knowing how and where to market so-called specialized films, or as Suzanne Whitten put it during a recent telephone interview, "films that need more promotion and more time spent on them," either because the subject matter is obscure or difficult, the filmmakers are unknown, or both.

"*Thousand Pieces of Gold*," co-produced by Nancy Kelly and Kenji Yamamoto and directed by Kelly, is a case in point. It was turned down by nearly everyone in the business before Greycat got it, according to Suzanne. But since Greycat opened the film last April, it has played in more than 100 theaters around the country with more play dates to come.

The feature film, based on a true story, centers on a Manchurian woman, Polly Bemis, who is sold to a marriage broker by her father. The title refers to her value on the open market. The broker then auctions Bemis to a saloon keeper in San Francisco, who takes her to Idaho to work in his establishment. As the story unfolds she regains her freedom through determination and courage. "*Thousand Pieces of Gold*" draws attention not only to individual courage but also to the important role of Chinese immigrants in shaping the American frontier in the latter part of the 19th century.

Although a lot of middle management people (in the major companies) wanted to pick up the film, said Suzanne, upper management felt it was too risky. The prevailing opinion seemed to be that a low-budget Western with a Chinese woman as the protagonist would be box office poison.

In August 1990, Yamamoto called the Whittens and asked them to look at the film on cassette. The couple was extremely moved by the subject and what was accomplished on a small budget. "We didn't hesitate," Suzanne said. They were intrigued by the very things

that led others to turn the film down. "We liked the idea that it was a different type of Western," said Suzanne. When the Whittens saw the film on the big screen for the first time in October, 1990, at the Mill Valley (California) Film Festival, the filmmakers' hometown, they were impressed by the enthusiastic response of the audience and the critics. Final arrangements were made for Greycat Films to become the theatrical distributors of "*Thousand Pieces of Gold*" in the US.

The film premiered April 18, 1991, at the Liberty Theater in Lewiston, Idaho. This was the closest city to the actual home of Polly Bemis, said Suzanne. The premiere benefited St. Gertrude's Museum which has Bemis memorabilia, the YWCA Women's Shelter and KUID-TV, a PBS station in Moscow, Idaho. The television station promoted the event. A visit to the area along the Salmon River where Bemis lived also was part of the festivities.

The Whittens felt the film would do well on the West Coast so they opened it next in Seattle, where it enjoyed its longest run, five months. On May 18, a benefit screening was held at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, where the film opened May 22 for its second longest run. From there it moved to Los Angeles and played six weeks at the Samuel Goldwyn Pavilion Theater.

Slowly, the distributors moved the film across the country, working with key theater chains such as Landmark, UA and AMC theaters. But its biggest success has been in the West.

"We felt it was a West Coast film all along," Suzanne said. "The farther east it goes, the more cynical are the reactions. We've had critics say it was corny, obvious, even racist. Fortunately, David, who is a real marketer and promoter, realized early it was a West Coast film because of the genre, the message and it is set in the Northwest."

*Continued on page 23*



*Toronto's Festival  
of Festivals mixes  
styles, genres,  
introduces filmmakers*

## A good showcase for women

BY ELFRIEDA M. ABBE

The Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals has a good track record for featuring women's works of all lengths and styles, covering a wide range of topics. The programming accommodates first-time filmmakers, such as Kate Hall ("The Forfeit") and seasoned professionals such as Nelly Kaplan ("Plaisir d'amour").

What is even more gratifying to those who distribute, exhibit or write about women's work, is that many of the filmmakers are invited to the festival and frequently attend screenings, answering questions afterwards. Most are available for interviews.

Julie Dash's "Daughters of the Dust" was on the program, and she was among those who attended. I had read about her film and looked forward to seeing it, but I was not prepared for its powerful impact.

This beautifully photographed film is the story of a family living on the Sea Islands, off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia, at the turn of the century. Their ancestors arrived in slave ships. Told in the non-linear manner of an African griot, the film chronicles events in the life of the Peazant family the day before several members leave the islands to go north in search of a new life.

Dash creates a sense of place, history and culture that is deeply moving and satisfying. Her characters, such as Nana Peazant, Eula Peazant and Yellow Mary Peazant — are unforgettable, life-affirming women, who work through a number of significant conflicts in the course of one day.

The film is richly textured, and expands the viewers' sense of Black cul-

ture and history. It moved audience members to cheers and tears.

After seeing the film, it was hard to understand why Dash was having a difficult time finding a distributor. (Subsequently Kino International picked it up.)

During an interview between screenings, she talked about the reactions of some distributors. She noted that "Daughters" doesn't fit preconceived ideas. People have come to expect films about street gangs from black filmmakers. Some distributors just didn't know how to deal with the unconventional style and the subject matter, according to Dash.

"I think they totally disengaged from it in the first 10 minutes. Some asked me what the film is about. Others said there is no audience for it."

But audiences all over the world see it differently. "Usually there's a lot of hugging, a lot of tears. People are asking me questions, thanking me. The buzz is out that it's a great film."

Dash said she wanted to make a film that showed strong Black women and their relationships with one another. "How we deal with problems. How we reach pivotal moments in our lives. What we relate to one another."

She created one person to represent history (Nana, played by Cora Lee Day), one the promise of the future (Eula, played by Alva Rogers), and one worldliness (Yellow Mary, played by Barbara-O).

Alva Rogers (left), Cora Lee Day and Barbara-O in Julie Dash's "Daughters of the Dust."



*Continued on page 13*



## Zeinabu irene Davis: filmmaker,

BY ANN FILEMYR

*"A Powerful Thang" is an experimental narrative film concerned with an African-American couple and their search for intimacy and friendship. The film revolves around two main characters, Yasmine Allen (Asma Feyijinmi) and her love interest Craig Watkins (John Jelks). Yasmine is a single mother of a two-year-old, Akin, and works as a freelance writer and editor. Craig is a high school music teacher and saxophone player. They have been dating for a month and are slowly falling in love. The trouble is that Yasmine desperately wants to end her self-imposed two-year celibacy. Craig does not have hang ups about sex, but he likes to take things slowly and is therefore not interested in rushing the physical level of their relationship.*

*The film highlights the beauty and simplicity of a day in the lives of African-American people in southwestern Ohio, covering ordinary events in each character's day. Yasmine's activities involve writing and caring for Akin, attending dance rehearsal and having a heartfelt talk concerning safe sex with her father, the jazz-loving Pop Allen (James S. Davis). Likewise, Craig wakes up and practices the scales on his saxophone, conducts band practice, gets a haircut and receives sage advice from his mother, the herbalist, Mama Joyce (Barbara-O).*

*In a gentle, positive way, the film shows that friendship, commitment and responsibility should always happen before intimacy is considered.*

*"A Powerful Thang: A Safe Sex Love Story for the 90s" premiered Sept. 29, 1991, at the Little Art Theatre, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Area premieres included: The Atlanta Third World Film Festival, Oct. 5, 1991; the Film Forum, Los Angeles, Nov. 4, 1991; P.S. 122 Performance Space, New York, Nov., 1991; and the Film Center at the Art Institute of Chicago, Nov., 1991.*

*"A Powerful Thang" paired a skilled group of film technicians from Ohio and Los Angeles with students from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Each professional on the film crew worked with students to strengthen the skills they had learned in the classroom. Due to Antioch College's rigorous film program, each of the students was given significant creative responsibility in key production positions.*

*Zeinabu joined me in front of the fireplace on one of the first cool nights of fall. We met to discuss "A Powerful Thang," three nights before its world premiere in Yellow Springs, Ohio.*

**AF:** I'd like to start with a little background. Why did you start making films?

**ZiD:** It all goes back to the woman who this film is dedicated to, Gini Booth. I started at Brown as a pre-law student, but got involved with Gini and a talk show she hosted called "Shades." I worked with her and even got to do a couple segments. At first, I wanted to do something like her. But the process that really capped my move from in front of the camera to behind the camera was my trip to Kenya in 1981.

I went for a study abroad program, but Kenya at that time was — still is — in a period of political unrest, the struggle for a freer, multiple-party state. I began working with Ngugi wa Thiong'o, probably one of the most significant writers in Kenya. He was teaching at the university, but his real work involved this play he had written.

The political and historical experience he was covering in the play was presented by the people who had actually been involved in the struggle he was trying to depict on stage. It was very exciting — very heady.

**AF:** What was your role in the play?

**ZiD:** Since I had the media experience with Gini at PBS, I was to do — well, Ngugi's vision was really broad, multi-media, and I was supposed to do slides as a rear projection behind the action.



## teacher with a powerful mission

In the course of working on the play, we would sit on the verandas at the hotels in Nairobi, you know, drink beer, pass the time of day, and we would see all these German and Belgian film crews coming in to do documentaries — Mutual of Omaha presents the Wild Kingdom kind of thing. And it really, really freaked me out. I was totally amazed by all the stuff that was happening in Kenya, by all the diverse ethnic groups, and none of these crews paid any attention to the rich culture there. The only people they ever depicted were the Masai because their lifestyle is so exotic.

**AF:** Because they live closest to the romantic image Europeans have of “wild Africa?”

**ZiD:** Right. So Ngugi said to me that it would be really good if I came back and we did a film together. I’m still working toward that.

**AF:** Is he still writing and living in Nairobi?

**ZiD:** No! He can’t. He had to go. The play we were working on was closed down by the government after the first few days. Thousands of people had been able to see it because it was in this large outdoor arena. The government got really scared. You see there was little differentiation between cast and crew, or cast and audience. Everyone had worked together to make it happen. The whole thing was bulldozed by the government and immediately Ngugi went into hiding. He had already spent a whole year in prison without explanation, a political prisoner. He escaped the country and lives as an exile, teaching in the States.

**AF:** I can see how you were politicized by that experience. Did it influence you aesthetically?

**ZiD:** One thing that African peoples share — I mean there’s over 50 countries in Africa and who knows how many languages there are — is a visual language. Even though the actors may not speak a familiar language, the gestures, movement, expression...there’s something about seeing a story told on a



**John Jelks and Asma Feyijinmi in “A Powerful Thang”**

*“Woman and man do you  
have a plan — a plan to  
thrive not merely survive”*

Hattie Gossert, poet



screen that can make you understand what is going on.

For me, I am trying to create a visual language that is reflective of the African-American female experience. So I am very specifically trying to do projects which are based on the lives of women that I know. I am trying to not necessarily tell a story in strict narrative style, but trying to take some chances, take some risks in telling the story to get across the everyday experiences of Black women's lives.

This is hard because our cinematic history, as Black women, is in its infancy. I mean Kathleen Collins was the first to do an independent feature film and that was in 1979 with "Cruise Brothers and Miss Molloy." There are a number of Black women making films now. Some names are becoming familiar like Julie Dash and Michelle Parkerson and Alile Sharon Larkin, but there are others — Camille Billops, Dareshi Kyi, O. Funmilayo Makarah, Angela Robinson, Jessie Maple — to mention a few.

**AF:** This is your seventh piece since the mid-'80s. That seems pretty productive. How do you continue to do your work?

**ZiD:** One, I'm crazy. Two, I'm hard-headed. Three, I put my own money into my projects. So, I'm always broke!

Really it is difficult to be a media artist in this country. In the life of making a film, so much has to happen. It takes so much energy and so much money. You have to be so many different kinds of personalities, part hustler, part collaborator, part compromiser, part real persistence. You have to be able to talk to people in the public, business people. You have to convince people to believe in you, to trust your vision.

Most women are taking care of children or a mate and just trying to survive, particularly in this country where there is so little government support for what we do as media artists. There is some, but compared to other countries, there's nothing at all. Of course the other challenge for women is the intimidation factor.

**AF:** Meaning?

**ZiD:** You take a film or video class and find out there are a lot of people who want to make the process of

making media very, very mysterious. They do not necessarily want to teach that any Joe Blow or Josephine Blow can pick up a camera and make a movie. They are intentionally closing the channels of expression and communication.

**AF:** Is that why teaching media is important to you?

**ZiD:** Yes, I spent \$40,000 learning how to do this work. Just because I spent that much money does not mean I think you have to. For me, it is very important to be a woman and to be a Black person and to teach Joe and Josephine how to use the equipment. I think it is very important for me as a Black woman to teach the production aspects of filmmaking because I'm not supposed to know how to do it. If I have a camera, well, I must've stole it from somewhere.

**AF:** You said that Black filmmaking is in its infancy. What do you mean by that?

**ZiD:** We have the Johnson Brothers, we have Oscar Micheaux. We even have some women who were involved in the process. I believe Zora Neale Hurston was involved in filmmaking. I'd love to have the time to do the research to prove that. So there is a legacy, a history. But it is also limited by the economic factors of the United States. When there is a prosperous time, people are making films. When not — well, there haven't been Black men and Black women who have been able to make films consistently in order to work out aesthetics and



**Zeinabu irene Davis (left), director/producer of "A Powerful Thang" with Nurudafina Pili Abena, percussionist; Tucki Bailey, saxophonist; and Hattie Gossert, vocalist.**

means of production. We're really just starting to do this. We don't have a well developed Black genre.

**AF:** What are the points of divergence from the European or Hollywood traditions? What signifies the work as developing a Black Aesthetic?

**ZiD:** I see a parallel with the development of blues and jazz. We are involved with a process of artistic evolution. We can take this medium and make it our own as we did with these musical genres. This is part of the impetus for Black filmmaking.

I've had conversations with A.J. Fielder about how we could shoot people in order to have it reflect their normal, everyday experiences, and how life don't really happen in 24 frames a second. Is there some other film speed that we should be using that would better



reflect the ways we move as a people? All of these kinds of questions need to be asked.

**AF:** How do you feel about the different visual languages of men and women, regardless of shared racial or ethnic culture?

**ZiD:** "Cycles," my last film, previous to "A Powerful Thang," touches women, it doesn't matter what color they are. There's something about the way that I was able to construct the film in terms of pacing, and the actions, and what happens psychologically to the character in the course of the film.

The whole notion of time and having to wait for something to happen, it's very important to the female experience. It doesn't matter what country you're from. All women all over the world are waiting for children, waiting for boyfriends, husbands, wives — whatever, waiting for telephones to ring. They're waiting for things to happen, waiting for menstruation to happen.

There was something going on in that film that really cut the nerve. They might not understand the whole thing. "Cycles" is a very dense film, but I think for the most part, there was something that I hit upon that I would like to further explore in terms of delineating a language, a visual language, that specifically reflects the lives of women.

**AF:** Even within your experimental format, you are concerned about realism. You want the characters to represent real people, not just ideas or points of view?

**ZiD:** Yeah, it's not the character as idea, although I think I may do that at some point, and that would follow Third World cinema theory. In this work, I am trying to be much more realistic. Most people would probably term "Powerful Thang" Afro-centric.

**AF:** Are you comfortable with that? How do you define Afro-centric?

**ZiD:** First of all, I don't really like the term Afro-centric because there isn't really a clear definition or agreement about what you mean when you say Afro-centric. When I say it, what I mean is embracing my culture as someone from the African Diaspora. I use my experiences of being in Africa, being in the Caribbean, and being in this country to make up what I put in my films. To me, it is about really trying to understand and respect Black culture, wherever it is, and to use it in my own life however it fits. In that sense, this film is Afro-centric because not only do I have Black funk music from the '70s, but also traditional jazz music, and then there's West African and Afro-Cuban rhythms and Yoruba chants. Now how in the hell does all this fit in one film? Well, I think it does.

**AF:** I noticed that Yasmine is underlined by the djembe drum and Craig is echoed by the sax and the funk music. Yasmine tends her altar of seashells and candles, and Craig carries his sax like a movable altar. You've used music to define them as separate, and yet to connect them.

**ZiD:** Good. I'm glad you got that. It works! (laughter) For me, music is the bridge that has gotten us over or has gotten us through. It connects us to ourselves. The saxophone represents the magic and the memory of where we have been in Africa. Even though it is not the drum, it is the uniquely American contribution to the musical language of our culture.

The other thing that is really important to me is the women composers and instrumentalists who created the original soundtrack for this film. The three best female African drummers in the country are in this film. I didn't necessarily start out with that intention, but it happened. And I know it's gonna blow some people away because they have never seen a woman play the djembe drum, and these women can play!

The instruments are also a visual element. In the film, I pixillate the saxophone to animate it, to give it life. When Craig wakes up, the saxophone wakes up. It shimmies up onto the bed and is ready for Craig to play. He takes no notice as if this is normal.

For Yasmine the magic is her bed. The scene where I pixillate — that's a long, tedious process of moving an object and shooting one frame, then moving it again — her bed, which is a futon, changes from a couch to a bed as if to say, "Alright! I'm ready! At last I'm gonna get some use!" (laughter) The bed, too, is personified. It is a celebration of the end of Yasmine's celibacy. I mean the bed is ready!

*Continued on page 22*

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*Zeinabu irene Davis has produced, written and directed more than six films, including "A Pèriod Piece," and "Cycles." The latter is included in the Whitney Museum of American Art, Biennial Exhibition of Best American Film & Video. She was awarded the title of Most Promising Filmmaker by the Black Filmmaker's Hall of Fame in 1987. Davis is one of the seven recipients of the 1991 Rockefeller Inter-Arts Media Fellowships. She has received individual artist fellowships and organizational grants from the Ohio Arts Council, the Fuji Film Award, an Art Matters Inc. Fellowship, an Apparatus Productions Project Grant and two NEA Regional fellowships through the Center for New Television. She is an assistant professor of film and audio production at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.*

*Working with her on the film were Doris-Owanda Johnson, who wrote the original story; S. Torriano Berry, cinematographer; Casi Pacilio, editor; and Christina Springer, assistant producer, art director and narration scripts. Musical consultants were Steve Schwerner, Bob Reamer and Bill Wilson.*



report

## From the festival circuit

**T**he 29th New York Film Festival at Lincoln Center included several notable works by women. One was the gripping documentary "Locked Up Time" by Sibylle Schonemann. The filmmaker returned to East Germany to confront those who were responsible for her imprisonment while the country was under Communist rule. She filmed their responses to her question: Why did you knowingly arrest an innocent woman? Schonemann was imprisoned because she had expressed a desire to emigrate.

Valeria Sarmiento's "Amelia Lopes O'Neill" is an absorbing love story with Laura Del Sol. Sarmiento co-wrote the script for this Chilean/Swiss/French production with Paul Ruiz. This is Sarmiento's second feature film. Her first "Notre marriage," won the Grand Prize at the San Sebastian Film Festival in 1984.

Johanna Heer and Werner Schmiedel directed "The Other Eye," a documentary about G.W. Pabst which chronicles the events in his life before and after he returned to Nazi Germany to direct movies for the Third Reich. Johanna Heer, known for her camera work in "Sugar-baby," photographed the

documentary. Clips from Pabst's films are interspersed with interviews of people who worked with him. Though the film unflinchingly probes the controversy surrounding Pabst's return to Nazi Germany, his reasons for doing so remain unanswered.

French director Agnes Varda's "Jacquot de Nantes" is a love letter and tribute to her husband and close collaborator, Jacques Demy. Filmed during the last weeks of his life, and in Varga's inimitable style, it celebrates Demy's unique talent.

Susan Meiselas photographed the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua, and 10 years later, she tracked down people in her photographs. The result is a most unusual and provocative study of the Sandinista revolution and its aftermath. "Pictures from the Revolution," directed by Meiselas, Richard P. Rogers and Alfred Guzzetti, brings us a poignant view of the guerrillas, somocistas and others who lived through the war.

For more information: Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023.

The following films were among those shown at the Women in Film and American Film Festival in November. Vibeke Lokkeberg's "Sea Gulls" (Norway), Christine Ezard's "The Fool"



German filmmaker Sibylle Schonemann and her film crew confront a former East German official in "Locked Up Time"

(Great Britain) and Mira Nair's "Mississippi Masala." For more information: AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave., Hollywood, CA . 213/463-6040.

The Hawaii International Film Festival in December featured about 100 films. The schedule included a panel of women filmmakers, moderated by Jeannette Paulson, discussing "Taking Our Values to Work." The event was sponsored by the Hilton Hawaiian Village and Women in Communications Inc.

Leonie de Picciotto has been made senior vice president of worldwide marketing at Samuel Goldwyn Co. She will oversee publicity, promotion and advertising. She worked as vice president in publicity for seven years. Phyllis de Picciotto, Leonie's mother, is the artistic director for the Santa Barbara International Film Festival to be in March.

Klara Peter, a student at the Academy of Theater and Film Arts in

Budapest, who also worked in Hungarian television, was named the winner of the International Documentary Association's David Wolper Student Documentary Achievement Award. Her 25-minute film, "Merciless Reprieve," looks at a handful of men who were sentenced to death before Hungary abolished capital punishment.

The International Documentary Association announced the following non-ranked winners: "Absolutely Positive," by Peter Adair and Janet Cole; "American Dream," by Barbara Kopple; and "Soldiers of Music," by Susan Fromke, Peter Gelb, Albert Maysles and Bob Eisenhard. For more information: The International Documentary Foundation, 1551 S. Robertson Blvd., Suite 201, Los Angeles, CA 90035-4233.

-- Harriet Robbins



## Are women making progress in film industry? Thoughts on the WIF survey

The "Employment of Executive Women in Film and Television: 1991," a report published by Women in Film, is part of a series of studies designed to record the progress of women in the industry.

In the forward, Sally A. Steenland states the objectives: (1) to provide data on the employment and depiction of women in media corporations and to point out specific professional areas and companies not equally open to women; and (2) to provide tools for assessing how far women in the industry have come and how far they have to go.

"Executive Women in Film and Television" succeeds on the first point, but goes only part way on the second.

First the statistics.

The report documents the percentage of women executives (directors, vice-presidents, senior vice-presidents, executive vice-presidents, presidents) working at major film and television studios and television networks. In January 1991 WIF surveyed 20 companies (see list in accompanying box), including about 1,124 employees,

and of those 378 (34%) were women executives.

- Out of 20 companies, 13 employed at least 30% women in the job categories listed. Of the film studios, Columbia Pictures employed the highest percentage of women executives, 38%, while Walt Disney/Touchstone Pictures and Tri-Star employed the lowest, 23%.

Among television

fluence what programs eventually get on the air. Directors in charge of current programs may shape the shows' themes and also have some control over who gets hired on the program."

- Only five companies employed at least 30% women at the vice president level and above. Lorimar leads with 53%. Viacom TV employed no women vice-presidents.

In targeting companies that are relatively more open to women executives, the study may be helpful to those seeking executive jobs. But using these statistics as a measure of how far women have come or how far we have to go, is limiting.

Some immediate questions come to mind. It would be useful to know, for example, what the 378 executive women think about their jobs? What motivates women to advance within these companies or to leave.

While the survey measures success in terms of position, the participants' comments suggest that women are questioning the corporate structure and may be seeking alternatives. And by including only major corporations, the survey does not reflect the status of many women who work independently or for smaller companies. Are they any less fulfilled or successful?

The most telling part of the study are the summaries of women's responses to the question: Why are the top jobs still off-limits to women?

Here are some samples.

- "Women in the industry attribute this (imbalance) to several factors: the natural bias that favors men in male-dominated companies, the informal, social business opportunities (often centered around sports)

**The 20 companies studied in "Executive Women in Film and Television: 1991" are: Film studios — Columbia Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Tri-Star, 20th Century Fox, Universal Pictures, Walt Disney Pictures, Warner Bros. Pictures; TV studios — Columbia Pictures Television, Lorimar, New World Entertainment TV, Paramount Television, 20th Century Fox TV, Universal Television, Viacom TV, Walt Disney Television, Warner Bros. Television; TV networks — ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox.**

studios Lorimar Television employed the highest percentage of women executives, 56%, and 20th Century Fox, the lowest, 19%.

- Among the networks, CBS and NBC employed the highest percentage of women executives, 41%, and Fox Broadcasting employed the lowest, 33%.

- The job women most likely hold is director. In 12 of the 20 companies, more than half of the directors were women. The survey points out that "although the job of director has limited influence, it is not without power. For example, directors in TV development may in-

- Only two companies employed at least 30% women at the senior/executive vice-president level or above, Lorimar leading with 50%. Two companies — CBS and Viacom — employed no women at the senior/executive vice president level.

- Of the 48 presidents in the 20 companies, only three — at Paramount Television, Columbia Pictures and Fox Broadcasting — were women.

These statistics show that women are well-represented at middle management levels but not at top executive levels — senior vice president and above.



that tend to include more men, family responsibilities that fall more heavily on women, and the fact that some women may remove themselves from the race to the top when they witness the price men pay to attain those positions."

- "Most women working in the industry agree that a major factor halting women's rise to the top is having children...Because companies in the industry are predicated on a worker pool with no intruding family responsibilities, and because the companies (for the most part) have not changed to accommodate the demands of family, women who become mothers must make individual accommodations or leave."

- According to one woman, "the skills that are refined in the corporate climb — intense competitiveness, killer instinct, narrow focus, unrelenting drive — are not the skills that make one a well-rounded human being or that add to the quality of one's life."

These comments suggest a different measure of success than the one outlined by the survey.

The survey tells us little about how women are doing apart from their job titles. Do they like their jobs? Are they accomplishing what they hoped to accomplish? What sacrifices have they had to make to get and keep those jobs? Is it

## Women in the Director's Chair International Film and Video Festival

The 11th annual Women in the Director's Chair International Film and Video Festival will be March 5 through March 8 at Chicago Filmmakers, 1229 W. Belmont, Chicago, and The Film Center, School of the Art Institute, Columbus Dr., and Jackson Blvd. There also will be a special screening March 1.

Among the films shown will be:

"Bingo," Franco-Metis filmmaker Marjorie Beaucage's first film examines the subculture of the Bingo Hall. "Sun, Moon and Feather," by Bob Rosen and Jane Zipp, a prize-winning musical comedy about three Native American sisters growing up in Brooklyn in the 1930s. (Native American and First Nation People)

"History and Memory," by Rea Tajiri, a layered, autobiographical documentary which

chronicles the videomaker's search to uncover the buried history of her family's internment camp experiences during World War II. (Transitions)

"'L' is for the Way You Look," by Jean Carlomusto, investigates women looking at women. "This Far by Faith," by Patrice O'Neill and Rhian Miller, chronicles the largest strike by African-American workers in the history of Mississippi at the Delta Pride Catfish Processing Plant. (Politics)

"I Was a Teenage Alien," by Gina Lamb, documents stories of three American teens who entered the US illegally. (Growing Up in America)

"Illusions," by Julie Dash, a black woman studio executive who appears to be white and a black woman singer who is the voice for a white Hollywood star, come to grips with a society that

perpetuates false images as status quo. "Losing Ground," by Kathleen Collins, a philosophy professor undertakes a quest for ecstasy. (Black Classics)

"The Match That Started My Fire," by Cathy Cook, examines women's sexual discoveries through a collection of candid stories told by women recalling early sexual experiences. (Sexuality)

"Spin Cycle," by Aarin Burch, an autobiographical search by a young black lesbian filmmaker. (In the Life: New Works by Black Lesbian Film and Video Makers)

"Sisters in the Struggle," by Dionne Brand and Ginny Stikeman, explores the diversity, vision and impetus of a contemporary black women's movement. (Action)

*Continued on page 22*

worth it? How many of the women surveyed are mothers? How do they handle the conflicts of job and family? What changes need to be made to make corporations more women friendly? Family friendly? What is the management style of the company? Are staff members included in decision-making? Are issues such as flexible hours and day care important? Is there a female network that

provides role models and mentors to support and teach other women? What influence have women media makers had on images of women in the media? What steps have been taken to hire and advance women and minorities?

When these questions are asked, we can better assess how far we've come and how far we have to go.

— Elfrieda M. Abbe

*WIF is a non-profit organization advocating equal opportunity and fair employment practices, promotion of talented women to key industry positions of authority and visibility, and more positive depiction of women in film and television. WIF also serves as a collective voice of support on pivotal issues affecting women's professional lives.*

*Copies of "Employment of Executive Women in Film and Television: 1991" are available for \$15 prepaid from: WIF, 6464 Sunset Blvd., #900, Los Angeles, CA 90028. 213/463-6040.*



## Toronto

*Continued from page 5*

The movie expresses many levels of conflict: between sisters, between generations, between husband and wife, between black and white, between the old and the new, but the message is one of healing.

"I come from a poor Black community in a New York housing project. You can't sit there and say, 'Life is miserable and hard.' You have to come to an understanding. You have to help yourself. You have a choice. There are all kinds of roads you can take. You have to seek help and heal yourself. And you have to know where you come from and make sure people know who you are," said Dash.

Another filmmaker who speaks in a distinctive voice is Ngozi Onwurah. Her film, "The Body Beautiful," which was shown on a program of short pieces, shares a painful personal experience concerning sexuality and beauty between Onwurah, a fashion model, and her mother, who is sexually marginalized because she does not meet cultural standards of beauty. The mother is deprived of her sexuality because she is perceived as plain and old. Even Onwurah makes assumptions about her mother, but in the film she comes to understand the older woman's pain and offers her a healing gift.

Kate Hall brings a unique perspective to the screen with her feature, "The Forfeit," a missing-child story with an unusual twist. While the plot revolves around a kidnapping, the movie is about an unconventional friendship between two women. One is a journalist who befriends the

filmmakers joined forces to promote and distribute their works as a package. But I'm not so sure the pairing of these disparate works will work so well outside a festival setting, where you expect to see a variety of works shown together. It's jarring to watch Hall's provocative

Schonemann returned to her homeland to confront, on film, those who were responsible for her incarceration, including judges, wardens and informants. She asks, "How and why did you knowingly condone the persecution and jailing of a completely innocent citizen?"

The ordinariness of her jailers and the banality of their explanations reveals a deeply disturbing complacent and compliant side of human nature that allows the rationalization of injustice. In contrast, the filmmaker's zealous search for answers lets neither her former captors nor the viewers off the hook. The raw power of her rage gives this film a compelling edge.

Sex is everywhere in Monika Treut's "My Father Is Coming," a wild, sensual adventure in New York. Segments with Annie Sprinkle are outrageous fun.

Sexual politics are the subject of two comedies, Mexican director Maria Novaro's "Danzon," about a woman who goes on a journey to find her missing dance partner and finds herself instead, and French director Nelly Kaplan's "Plaisir d'amour," a madcap feminist switch on the Don Juan story.

Jodie Foster's "Little Man Tate" and Martha Coolidge's "Rambling Rose" were given special presentations.

## Human Rights Watch Festival

The Human Rights Watch Film Festival will be May 8-17 at the Loews Theater in New York City. The festival draws on the power of film to enhance public awareness of human rights issues and to promote public education about specific human rights cases. Organizers hope it will be a catalyst for the creation and distribution of human rights oriented films and provide filmmakers and activists from around the world with a unique public forum. Discussions are held following many of the screenings.

Last year's festival included works such as "Scraps of Life," by Gayla Jamison, a video work-in-progress with interviews of several Chilean women whose loved ones "disappeared" and "Children of Desired Sex" by Mira Nair, exploring the implications of selective abortion in India, where the birth of a son is celebrated while the birth of a daughter is often seen as a burden. For more information: Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 485 5th Ave., New York, NY 10017-6104. 212/ 972-8400. FAX: 212/972-0905.

kidnapper, at first to get a story. But then she helps the woman. The reporter goes against the advice of her colleagues in getting involved, but by following her intuition, she brings about a satisfying and unconventional resolution.

Hall's film was paired with Bonnie Paley's "Walking the Dog," a whimsical, humorous piece about an antique dealer who can't bear to part with her priceless mementos.

Teaming these two short films was so successful that the

piece in the same context as Paley's lighthearted work. Each would benefit from being a single feature.

### Other films.

The fall of the Berlin Wall enabled German filmmaker Sibylle Schonemann to make her courageous documentary "Locked Up Time." In 1984, the filmmaker was arrested, taken into custody and expelled from East Germany because she expressed a desire to emigrate.



## people

The following were among the grant recipients of Film in the Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul) regional film/video grants:

**Production grants:**  
**Cathy Cook**, Milwaukee, \$12,000, to support an animated experimental narrative film about the life of a girl who is agoraphobic; **Laura Davis**, Minneapolis, \$5,000, to support an experimental documentary reenacting the Women's War, a 1929 uprising in Aba, Nigeria; **Sandy Maliga**, Minneapolis, \$4,690, to support an experimental videotape about a woman's reflections on the nature of intimacy and the power struggles in a couple's relationship; **K. Erin O'Meara and Brian Smith**, Milwaukee, \$11,000, to support a series of cable access programs combining performance, experimental video and interviews.

**Works-in Progress:**  
**Sadie Benning**, Milwaukee, \$6,250, to support the completion of a video exploring the experience of fear and tragedy in the artist's childhood; **Christine Ciano**, Milwaukee, \$3,000, to support completion of a short narrative film about four women who meet when one of them is stranded on a highway.

**Encouragement grants:** **Emily Birdsong**, Minneapolis, \$1,000, to support a clay-animated parody of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"; **Camille Grimaldi Seaman**, Iowa City, \$3,000, to support two video tapes on motherhood which present the experiences of

women from different social and economic backgrounds at different stages of their lives.

For more information: Film in the Cities, 2388 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 55114. 612/646-6104.

Among the 19 winners from the Northwest Film & Video Festival in Portland in November were: **Sara Diamond** (Vancouver, B.C.) for "Women of Wood"; **Janet Hawkwood** (Vancouver, B.C.) for "The Old Country"; **Joanna Priestley** (Portland) for "After the Fall"; and **Elaine Velazquez** (Portland) for "Moving Mountains."

For more information: Northwest Film & Video Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205. 503/226-2811. FAX: 503/226-4842.

"Macha's Curse," by **Rose Bond**, received an award for Best Animated Production at the Chicago International Children's Festival. "Faith and Patience," directed by **Sheila Sofian**, won a special festival award for animation.

**Dena Aronson and Evelyn Patricia Terry**, Milwaukee, received a \$4,455 Diverse Visions grant from Intermedia Arts in Minneapolis for "Subtle Memories and Empty Promises," a two-video installation that will reflect the unique orientations of Aronson, a Russian-Jewish-American, and Terry, an African-American, each evolving and recovering from their own cultural and personal views on sexual orientation. For more information: Intermedia Arts, 425 Ontario St. SE, Min-

neapolis, MN 55414. 612/627-4444.

**Martha Alencar**, producer of "The Scoundrel" (Brazil) enjoyed her first visit to the US when she attended the Americas Film Festival and the American Film Market in Los Angeles in October.

Independent producer **Ada Marie Babino** was awarded a 1992 Grants-in-Aid Award from the Washington, D.C., Commission on the Arts and Humanities. The project, "Middle Passage: En-Roots," will be shot in black and white 16mm. It takes a satirical look at beauty standards relating to black hair care. Babino said: "This project was conceived because of the age old belief of good hair and bad hair that is perpetuated in the black community." Babino is a former associate producer of Black Entertainment Television's "Screen Scene." She acted as the associate producer for independent filmmaker Olaniyi Areke's film, "Disillusion" and line producer for the upcoming feature film, "Nunu," by Haile Gerima. For more information: Jezebel Productions, 115 V St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

**Jenny Benidt** was appointed vice president of Arenas Group, an entertainment marketing and public relations firm that represents the Spanish Film Institute in the US. She previously was associated with UniFrance. For more information: Spanish Film Institute, 8833 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 408, Los Angeles,

CA 90069. 213/659-5909. FAX: 213/659-8124.

The children's television series "Wordscape" won an Emmy Award in the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Youth/Children's Program category. Produced by Tulsa, Okla., filmmaker **Cathey Edwards**, the production is a 16-part series designed to teach vocabulary and literacy to students in grades four through six. Introducing students to more than 200 words in English, the series has been seen in classrooms throughout Canada and the US.

For more information: Cathey Edwards Productions, PO Box 52112, Tulsa, OK 74152-0112. 918/599-0910.

**Annette Insdorf**, Columbian University Film Division chairwoman, moderated a panel discussion, "Reel Pieces: The International Scene," in Oct. at the 92nd St. Y in New York.

Mittman Productions Inc., headed by **Julie Mittman**, moved to 155 N. Harbor Dr., Suite 1201, Chicago, IL 60601. The new phone number is 312/565-2878. The firm specializes in documentary, educational and public service programming for non-profit organizations. Clients include The Chicago Board of Education and the Field Museum.

Mexican director **Maria Novaro's** "Danzon" received the award for best film at the Latino Film Festival in New York in September.



## O. Funmilayo

**Makarah**, curated "LA Woman: California Girls" in Vancouver, B.C. Makarah writes: "This exhibition by women videomakers who have lived in Los Angeles and Oakland challenges media included stereotypes about California and America. Just as the women videomakers themselves differ from the cardboard cut-outs popularized on network television and Hollywood-style movies, so too does each woman's view of California and of the US differ. This multi-faceted view includes politics, loss, immigration, ethnicity and gender in a program that will stay with you long after the final credit stops rolling."

Makarah also curated "Black Men in America: Changing Reality" for VideoLACE as part of LA Freewaves. Using **Portia Cobb's** videotape, "Species In-Danger-Ed" as a starting point, this exhibit engages artists from across the country in a video examination of black men in America. The selected tapes (by black men and non-black men and women) challenge perceptions of media-induced stereotypes while offering a glimpse into the aspirations, concerns, obstacles and realities of contemporary African-American men.

These programs are available for touring. For more information: O. Funmilayo Makarah, 308 Westwood Plaza #421, Los Angeles, CA 90024. 213/738-7665.

Producer/director/writer **Jill Petzall** was awarded a Mid-America Emmy in the broadcast writing category

by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS), St. Louis chapter. The Emmy Award is considered the highest award in the industry for outstanding achievement. Petzall's winning script was the 30-minute documentary, "Critical Stages," a story about the struggles and obsessions required to become a professional musician. Personal interviews and musical rehearsals demonstrate the critical stages of learning in the daily life of aspiring concert artists.

**Wendy Hearn**, owner of Videophase Productions in St. Louis, produced and directed the video documentary. The program focused on the music education offered by the St. Louis Conservatory and School for the Arts, and was funded by a grant from Committee for Access and Local Origination Programming (CALOP). The documentary has been shown on Continental Cable since March, 1991.

Petzall is an independent filmmaker, specializing in cultural arts, education and social-issue documentary programs.

German filmmaker **Sibylle Schonemann's** documentary "Locked Up Time" won second prize at the Tokyo International Film Festival. The film also has been entered in the Oscar race in the best documentary category.

**Cheryl Marie Wade**, Berkeley, was awarded the Ce Ce Robinson Award for artistic excellence at the Media Access Awards in Santa Monica, Calif. Her poetry-performance video, "Here," which tells the

story of a profoundly disabled woman's fight for an empowered self-identity, was awarded a certificate of honor in the Special Merit category. "Here" also received a third place award in the arts at the first East Bay Video Festival in Berkeley. "Here" is Wade's first video. One of Wade's poems, "I Am Not One of The," was published in the Nov./Dec. 1991, issue of Ms. magazine. For more information: Cheryl Marie Wade 1613 5th St., Berkeley CA 94710-1714. 510/525-7960.

Poet **Diane Williams**, journalist **Nedhera Landers**, video artist **Jane Cottis** and **Annette Appell** were among the panelists in a discussion of "Lesbian Erotica" led by **Linda Rodgers** at the Chicago Lesbian & Gay International Film Festival. **Sadie Benning**, who used a plastic video camera (a Fisher Price Pixelvision) to create a series of deeply personal, artistically deft and politically charged works that document her evolving state of mind, screened and discussed her works at the festival.

**Christina Zawadiwsky**, Milwaukee, is producing a weekly television series, "Where the Waters Meet," of in-depth interviews with people involved in the arts. The series is aired on Warner Cable Channel 14 and Viacom channel 11B, the cable access stations. Mark Mars is the co-producer. For more information: Christina Zawadiwsky, 1641 N. Humboldt Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202. 414/272-3592.

## i n p r o g r e s s

Videographer **Dena Aronson**, Milwaukee, Wis., is collaborating with visual artist **Evelyn Patricia Terry** to produce two videos — "Women Need to Release" and "Streetwise" — for Terry's installation "Subtle Memories and Empty Promises." The first celebrates visually, sensually and aesthetically, interactions between consenting adults from a female point of view. Although our society sanctions blatant sexuality from nearly every aspect of our environment, women are often punished for exploring sexual imagery in art.

"Streetwise" is about surviving the uncontrollable impositions of language and sounds everyone encounters in public places such as buses, streets, laundromats and stores. The videos will be part of Terry's site-specific installation at Walker's Point Center for the Arts in Milwaukee.

**Beeban Kidron**, director of "Antonia and Jane" and "Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit," just completed shooting a new film, "Used People," a comedy with Shirley MacLaine and Marcello Mastroianni. Kidron describes the film as being "about families, with a mother/daughter theme."

**Mary R. Katzke** began shooting her feature film "Pen Pals" in October. The film, written and directed by Katzke, a graduate student at New York University, has a \$250,000 budget and is part of the worldwide Cinemabeam Project. The screenplay is one of two US selections in the competition designed



to identify emerging filmmakers around the world and assist them with funds for 35mm film stock and processing. The film will be exhibited at the Tokyo International Film Festival in September.

Women working on the project include: **Lisa Bruce**, producer; **Edith Polk**, publicity; **Beth Serlin**, production manager; **Susan Bolles**, production designer; **Risa Koren**, first assistant director; **Veronica Alweiss**, second assistant director; **Pamela Koffler**, script supervisor; **Wendy Holcomb**, unit manager; **Leah Schoenewolf**, first assistant camera; **Marcia Shulman**, casting; and **Deirdre Walsh**, locations manager. For more information: Pen Pals, 225 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012. 212/941-7272.

**Ellen Osborne and Maureen Gosling** are co-producing a one-hour film, "Las Mujeres: The Women of Juchitan" (working title), about a unique community in southern Mexico with an uncommon gender equality that contradicts the stereotypes of the passive Mexican woman and macho Mexican man. Women have dominion over the marketplace, commerce and other economic affairs. They are responsible for the moral integrity of the family and serve as protectors, both emotionally and physically, to family and friends. Men and women have equally owned land, supported radical political parties and fought side by side in war.

"Las Mujeres" celebrates this culture through the eyes of four

Juchitan women as they embark on a monthlong preparation for Las Velas de Mayo (The Candles of May). While living in Mexico, Osborne and Clement visited Juchitan and were struck by the extraordinary vivaciousness and openness of the women they met. The film will focus on the women in the context of this city which

Ln., Oakland, CA 94602. 510/531-5897.

**Jill Petzall** is completing work on "Doubly-Bound: The Paradox of Jewish Survivors in Today's Germany," a 60-minute video documentary about Jewish Holocaust survivors who choose to live in modern Germany. The documen-

She is in the process of raising another \$20,000 to complete the film.

She writes: "'Gay Youth' will include the stories of Bobby Griffith, a 20-year-old who committed suicide in 1983, and Gina Gutierrez, a 17-year-old high school senior who is finding support for her sexual identity from loving parents, friends and teachers. One story is about death, the other about life — the video is about what makes the difference.

"The statistics about gay and lesbian youth are shocking. Thirty percent of all youth suicides in the US are gay and lesbian; gay and lesbian young people are three times more prone to drug and alcohol abuse as heterosexual youth; one fourth of all homeless kids are gay and lesbian. What is even more horrifying is that the statistics are routinely ignored," writes Walton.

Walton's previous work, "Out in Suburbia," won the Best Documentary at the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in 1989. The tape is being distributed by Filmmakers Library in New York. For more information: Pam Walton, BANGLE (Bay Area Network of Gay and Lesbian Educators), Box 391025, Mountain View, CA 94039.

The following films are in production according to Variety: "Claire of the Moon" by **Nicole Conn**, distributor, Yes Entertainment; "Anniversary" by **Lisa Gadson**, no distributor; "Future Tense" by **Wendy Daniels**.

### Filmmaker declares 'Emergency'

**A rape occurs every 6 minutes. One in 4 women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetimes. One woman is beaten by a male relative or boyfriend every 18 minutes. These shocking statistics are stated in a study guide provided by Adele Brown with her 9-minute experimental film, "Emergency." The film raises important questions about the normalizing of rape and violence against women in American cultural consciousness and is a good departure point for discussion. In addition to classrooms, the film is appropriate for women's studies groups and centers, fraternities, sororities and dorms. For more information: Adele Brown, 7 Barbara Lane, Binghamton, New York 13903-2755. 607/724-3809**

is known for its abundance of festivals and its political activism.

Filming is scheduled to begin this spring during the festival of Las Velas. The filmmakers are actively fund-raising. They made a pre-sale to Swedish television.

Osborne made "Clowning Around" with **Kelly Clement**, which received an Academy Award for Best Student Documentary. Maureen Gosling has worked with filmmaker Les Blank for nearly 20 years as co-filmmaker, editor and sound recordist. She received an American Cinema Editors award nomination for "Burden of Dreams."

For more information: Maureen Gosling, Osborne/Clement Productions, 2417 Ravenwood

tary explores how the survivors cope with devastating loss in the thriving Berlin culture that betrayed them. Petzall is looking for a woman sound technician with extensive experience in documentary field work, who wants to travel to Germany this summer.

For more information: Jill Petzall, Beacon Productions Inc., 139 N. Bemiston, St. Louis, MO 63105. 314/725-1196.

**Pam Walton's** "Gay Youth" is in post-production. She hopes the 58-minute educational video about gay and lesbian youth will be distributed in public high schools in the fall. Walton has received more than \$40,000 in funding. Sources include the Paul Robeson Fund and the Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation.



## in distribution

Three 30-minute television documentaries about AIDS were produced and are being distributed by Northeastern Wisconsin In-School Telecommunications (NEWIST/CESA). **Eileen Littig** is NEWIST's producer/director.

**"AIDS or Eighty Something"** brings home the reality of AIDS to teens as people with AIDS talk about how they became infected when they were teens. The documentary won the Bronze Award at the 1989 International Film and TV Festival of New York and the Gold Award in the instructional category of the 1990 Corporation for Public Broadcasting awards for local programs.

**"Changing Focus: Women, Children and AIDS"** examines the unique problems of women with AIDS, in which inadequate health care, poverty and misdiagnosis contribute to overwhelming problems. 30 to 50 percent of the babies born to HIV positive women will develop AIDS. The documentary won an honorable mention from American Women in Radio and Television Inc. in 1991, the Bronze Award at the 1991 WorldFest in Houston and a blue ribbon at the 1991 American Film and Video Festival. It also was awarded the CINE Golden Eagle in Washington, D.C.

**"Safetalk: Parents and Teachers Discuss Aids"** recognizes that parents and teachers are the gatekeepers to our youth. Keeping this in

mind, the documentary gathers experts on HIV infection and human sexuality, persons with AIDS and parents of children with AIDS from across the country to assist parents and teachers with the important task of teaching youths how to

ment, health, love, sex, happiness and death. The video was directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker **Robin Lehman**.

For more information: Terra Nova Films Inc., 9848 S. Winchester Ave., Chicago IL 60643. 312/881-8491.

**GENDERS**, a quarterly journal, is seeking articles concerned with theories of gender and sexuality in art, literature, history, music, photography, TV and film. The editors are looking for critiques in the following areas: psychoanalytic theory; nationality, sexuality and race; gay and lesbian theory; sexuality and violence in postmodernism; multicultural theory; sexual abuse; films directed by women; documentaries; photography. To obtain a copy of the guidelines for contributors, call 303/492-2853 or write: Ann Kibbey, University of Colorado, Campus Box 226, Boulder, CO 80309.

protect themselves against the deadly virus.

NEWIST's new video, **"Sexual Orientation: Reading Between the Labels,"** focuses on issues facing gay and lesbian youth and is designed to help build respect between individuals with divergent sexual orientations. Ignorance about homosexuality has contributed to a climate of fear, isolation, discrimination and violence towards those perceived as homosexual. The documentary provides a forum for gay and non-gay teens to speak of their concerns.

For more information: NEWIST, 1S 1110 University of Wisconsin, Green Bay WI 54311. 414/465-2599.

**"Forever Young,"** is a documentary that looks at the post-retirement years of 26 older adults who share their wisdom and warmth on a variety of topics including retire-

ment, health, love, sex, happiness and death. The video was directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker **Robin Lehman**.

Releases from Appalshop:  
**"Peace Stories"** by **Anne Johnson** presents the testimony of a World War I veteran, a Cyclotron supervisor at Oak Ridge during the building of the first atomic bomb and a US Army veteran of Vietnam. Their words are intercut with archival footage and photographs from the three conflicts, but the strength of the program is in the words of the three veterans as they tell how they came to understand war and to choose peace.

**"Mountain Vision: Homegrown Television in Appalachia"** by **Susie Wehling**. Looks at a group of people in the Appalachian mountains who created homegrown television in response to negative images created by the media. The local producers believe that by showing local people and places on television, they are promoting and preserving their cultural identity.

For more information: Appalshop Inc., 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858. 606/633-0108.

US distribution rights for Mexican director **Maria Novaro's "Danzon"** were acquired by Orion Classics.

The Video Data Bank, Chicago, has put together nine video touring packages:

**"Reframing the Family"** explores stereotypical views of the family while offering insights into new conditions of the family.

**"Video for Women's Lives: Artists' and Activists' Works on Women's Lives"** is a provocative series of feminist activist videos which confronts sexism by raising issues that are frequently misrepresented in the media, such as prostitution, safe sex, abortion, AIDS and lesbian identity.

Other programs include **"Confronting Disease through the Mediated Body," "The Mother and Child Reunion," "Magnetic Youth: Teen Powered TV," "Video Witnesses: Festival of New Journalism," "Body Politic"** and **"Reconstructed Realms."**

Each video program will be available until May 1992. The cost is \$400 for a one-time screening of each title. Extended exhibitions will be available for an additional fee. For more information: Video Data Bank, 37 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60603. 312/899-5100.



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## books

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A series of biographies from Greenwood Press Inc. includes the lives of **Jessica Tandy and Mary Martin**. For more information: Greenwood Press Inc., 88 Post Rd. West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881.

**"Art on Screen: A Directory of Films and Videos about the Visual Arts"** (G.K. Hall & Co., \$65, cloth and \$35, paperback) provides detailed information on more than 900 films and videos, covering fine arts, archaeology, photography, the decorative arts and other art-related topics. For more information: GKH, 70 Lincoln St., Boston, MA 02111. 617/423-3990.

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## opportunities

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**Alternative Music Television.** Seeks music related videotapes for weekly program on WYOU-TV, a cable access station in Madison, Wis. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment but videomakers will be credited. For more information: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

**The American Experience.** The PBS series on American history seeks hour-long films and tapes in development, in production or completed. Biographies, histories and dramas should be based on primary sources. For more information: Llew Smith, The American Experience, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134. 617/492-2777 EXT-4313.

**Art on Screen: Film and Video in Museums.**

**Workshop, March 23-24.** Presented by the Program for Art on Film in collaboration with The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. For programmers, educators, curators, film production coordinators and filmmakers in art museums and historical societies. Will explore ways museum staff can use films and videos more effectively to enhance the visitor's experience. Also sessions on commissioning productions and relating critical criteria to the conception and creation of a film or video. For more information: Beth Schneider, The Museum of Fine Arts, PO Box 6826, Houston, TX 77265. 713/639-7321. FAX:713/639-7399.

**Chicago Resource Center.** Funds non-profit lesbian and gay advocacy efforts and some media projects. For more information: Chicago Resource Center, 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 315, Chicago, IL 60604. 312/461-9333.

**Deep Dish TV.** Seeks proposals and tapes for 1992 season with a critical perspective on quincentenary. Interested in works by indigenous people on official vs. unofficial history, relationships between N. and S. America, grassroots performances and teachings. For more information: Deep Dish TV, program director, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012. 212/473-8933. FAX:212/420-8223.

**Feed Back.** Seeking 3/4", VHS or Hi-8 work for show airing on cable access. A collaborative effort between the Center for New Television and NAME. For more information: Feed Back, Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622.

**Image Union.** This weekly program aired on WTTW in Chicago features works by independent producers. Seeking 3/4" tapes for broadcasting — documentary, narrative, animation, comedy, experimental. For works aired, \$25 per minute. For more information: Shelley Spencer, WTTW, 5400 St. Louis Ave., Chicago, IL 60625. 312/583-5000.

**Independent Film Group.** Looking for screenplays in all genres (no horror) for low-budget feature films. Send scripts with contact information to: Phillips/West, 304 Clermont Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11205-4606.

**IV-TV** in Seattle encourages video artists, students, amateurs and news camera operators to submit mini-documentaries, video art, found footage, news leaks or anything of interest for cablecast on Channel 26, Seattle. Each tape box and cassette must bear entrants' name, entry title and running time (25 min. maximum). Submit on VHS or 3/4" (preferred). Include a signed release form. For more information: IV-TV, 1125 N. 98th St., Seattle, WA 98103. 206/522-6672.

**Lesbians in the Creative Arts.** Seeking video with lesbian content for screening and possible distribution. For guidelines: Video, Suite 443, 496A Hudson St., New York, NY 10014.

**Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions.** Will consider recently completed video art, experimental documentaries and other innovative film and video. Uses 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. For more information: Adriene Jenik, LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los An-

geles, CA 90021. 213/624-5650.

**National Video Resources.** Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, NVR is seeking proposals for independent media distribution projects. For more information: NVR, 73 Spring St., Suite 606, New York, NY 10012. 212/274-8080. FAX: 212/274-8081.

**Native Voices.** Seeking proposals for two half-hour cultural affairs programs by and for Montana Native Americans. For more information: Native Voices Public Television Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717. 406/994-6223.

**New Day Films.** The New York City distributor is seeking films and tapes for its catalog. New Day, an organization of 35 independent filmmakers in 20 cities, offers resources of a promotion and marketing consultant; target promotion; a central business office in New York City; regular monthly reports on your film's or tape's activity and royalties; yearly meetings; access to detailed information on film festivals, foreign sales, cable sales, theatrical distribution, television sales; specific information about audiences. For more information: New Day Film Cooperative, 853 Broadway, Suite 1210, New York, NY 10003. 212/477-4604.

**New Television.** Seeks works using the medium and/or new technology in artistic ways. Broad range of genres. Should be under 30 minutes. Submit 3/4" or VHS cassettes of finished or works-in-progress. For more information: WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134. 617/492-2777.



WNET, 356 W. 58th St.,  
New York, NY 10019.  
212/560-3137.

**Newton Television Foundation.** Seeks proposals from independent producers for documentaries on issues of public concern. For more information: The Newton Television Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168. 617/965-8477.

**Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting.** Up to five fellowships of \$20,000 awarded to persons who have not earned money writing, or sold or optioned a screenplay or teleplay. For more information: Academy Foundation, Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Box 5511, Beverly Hills, CA 90209.

**The '90s.** This 13-week satellite public broadcast program seeks independent films and videos under 10 minutes. Accepts 3/4" or hi-8. Include SAS mailer or \$3 to cover postage if you want your tape returned. Fee to artist: \$125/min. aired. For more information: The '90s, 400 N. Michigan Ave., #1608, Chicago, IL 60611. 312/321-9321.

**Reel Time.** PS 122's monthly film series is seeking experimental, documentary and narrative films. Super 8 and 16mm only. Send prints or VHS copies to: Jim Browne, Reel Time, Performance Space 122, 150 First Ave., New York, NY 10009. 212/477-5288.

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## deadlines

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**US Industrial Film & Video Festival.** Call for entries deadline: March 1. One of the world's largest competitions devoted to recognition of sponsored, business, television and industrial productions. Entries may be commercially, in-plant, government or independently produced. Last year there were 1,500 submissions from 30 nations. Includes any productions not previously entered which have been produced or released in the 18 months prior to March 1. Entry may be on 1/2" VHS or 3/4" U-Matic video tapes in NTSC, PAL or SECAM (Low Band) formats or on 16 mm film. Categories include advertising, agriculture, art, sales, sports, training, manufacturing, TV documentaries, video news releases, public service announcements and home videos. Also technical categories, writing, editing, photography. For more information: US Industrial Film & Video Festival, 841 N. Addison Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126-1291. 708/834-7773. FAX: 708/834-5565.

**Carolina Film & Video Festival.** Call for entries deadline: March 1. Accepting submissions in all formats. For more information: Michael Frier-son, Broadcasting/Cinema, Carmichael Bldg., UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27412. 919/334-5360.

**USA Film Festival/Dallas.** Call for entries deadline: March 2. Seeks innovative American short films for short film and video competition. \$35 entry fee. For more information: USA Film Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX

75204. 214/821-NEWS.  
FAX: 214/821-6364.

**Charlotte Film & Video Festival.** Call for entries deadline: March 9. Cash awards for accepted works. For more information: Mint Museum of Art, c/o Robert West, 2730 Randolph Rd., Charlotte, NC 28207. 704/337-2000. FAX: 704/337-2101.

**Independent Television Service.** Call for project proposals deadline: March 16. Seeking proposals for projects of all lengths and genres intended for broadcast on public television. For guidelines: ITVS, PO Box 75455, St. Paul, MN 55175. 612/225-9035.

**National Educational Media Market.** Call for entries deadline: April 10. Late submissions accepted until May 1 with late fee. Showcases new independent documentaries and educational/special interest media for non-theatrical distributors seeking acquisitions. Market attracts a variety of exhibitors who specialize in marketing to educational institutions. Seeking films, videos and interactive videodiscs. Works in progress are welcome. For more information: National Educational Media Market, 655 13th St., Oakland, CA 94612-1220. 510/465-6885. FAX: 510/465-2835.

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## festivals

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**American Film Market.** Feb. 27-March 6, Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, Santa Monica, Calif. Will offer 600 screenings of 258 titles with a strong showing of European films, including action/adventure, comedies and drama. A weeklong series of forums will focus on international issues relating to independent distributors and producers.

**Portland International Film Festival.** Feb. 13-March 1. Portland Art Museum Northwest Film Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland. The festival includes films from the best of several international festivals — Cannes, Berlin, New York, Toronto and Venice. It will feature 50 films from more than two dozen countries. Highlights will include an opening night gala, a special children's matinee, the Pacific Rim Showcase and the presentation of George Pabst's 1927 silent classic, "The Love of Jeanne Ney" with an original score by Northwest composer Timothy Brock. For more information: Portland Art Museum, Northwest Film & Video Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland OR 97205. 503/226-2811. FAX: 503/226-4842.

**New York National High School Film & Video Festival.** Feb. 22. Provides visibility for high school film and video artists. Showcases work by students under 18. For more information: NYC National High School Film & Video Festival. Trinity School, 101 W. 91st St., New York, NY 10024. 212/876-5727.



**Edmonton Annual Film Festival.** Feb. 26-March 1. Peter Medak ("The Krays" and "Let Him Have It") will participate. For more information: National Screen Institute, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. 403/421-4084. FAX: 403/425-8098.

**Ann Arbor Film Festival and Conference.** March 13-16. Independent filmmakers present workshops, film exhibitions and panel discussions. Open screenings for conference attendees. Retrospective screening of awarded films from past 29 years. For more information: Ann Arbor Film Festival, PO Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107. 313/995-5356.

**Santa Fe Film Expo.** Throughout March. For more information: The Center for Contemporary Arts, PO Box 148, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

**BACA/The Brooklyn Arts Council Film and Video Festival.** March 7, 12, 14, 21, 23, 26 and 28. Screenings at various locations. For more information BACA/The Brooklyn Arts Council, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238. 718/783-3077 or 718/783-4469.

**New Directors/New Films.** March 20-April 5. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Surveys world cinema. Features new and unrecognized narrative features, documentaries and shorts. 20 to 25 programs. For more information: New Directors/New Films, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10023-6595. 212/875-5628. FAX: 212/875-5636.

**WOW (Women One World) Cafe Women's Film & Video Festival.** March 26-April 1. New works by women including experimental and documentary films and videos, mostly shorts. WOW is a women-run experimental theater collective. For more information: WOW Festival, 151 1st Ave., Suite W, New York, NY 10003. 212/674-4736.

**Third World International Women's Film and Video Festival.** March 27-30, Dobie Theater, 2021 Guadalupe, Austin, Texas. Features works by women with a regional showcase. Will spotlight works by Native American women. Films include "Her Giveaway," and "Honored by the Moon," by Mona Smith; "And Women Wove It In a Basket" by Bushra Assouz, Marlene Farnum and Nettie Kuneki; "Daughters of the Dust" by Julie Dash; and "A Place of Rage" by Pratiba Parmer. For more information: Women's Film & Video Festival, Women's Media Project, Box 49432, Austin, TX 78765. 512/442-5760.

**Birmingham Educational Film & Video Festival.** April 8-12, Birmingham, Ala. Purpose is to promote the use of film and video as an educational tool. Categories include business and commerce, early childhood development and elementary education, environmental issues, performing arts, geography and history, guidance and counseling, health and physical education, math and science and teacher career education. For more information: Birmingham International Educa-

tion Film Festival, Box 2641, Birmingham, AL 35291-0665. 205/250-2711.

**Cleveland International Film Festival.** April 3-12. Screens 40 features, documentaries and short films from about 15 countries. Filmmakers attend whenever possible. In past years, Frank Capra, Lina Wertmuller, Jiri Menzel, Robert Altman and Barbara Kopple attended. Program includes independent works and shorter works. For more information: David Wittkowsky, Cleveland International Film Festival, 6200 SOM Center Rd. C20, Cleveland, OH 44139. 216/349-0270. FAX: 216/349-0210.

**US Environmental Film Festival.** April 23-26. Colorado Springs, Colo. Features films and videos on environmental issues. For more information: USEFF, 1026 W. Colorado Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80904. 719/520-1952. FAX: 719/520-9157.

**Worldfest Houston.** April 24-May 3. A film/video market with a program book, competition and awards in six categories: shorts, documentaries, TV commercials, experimental/independent and TV production. For more information: Worldfest Houston, PO Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256. 713/965-9955. FAX: 713/965-9960.

**LA Asian Pacific American International Film & Video Festival.** May. Sponsored by Visual Communications and UCLA Film & TV Archive. The 7-year-old festival highlights cinematic expression by Asian Pacific-

American filmmakers and Asian-Pacific Rim international productions. For more information: LA Asian Pacific American International Film & Video Festival, Visual Communications, 263 S. Los Angeles St., Suite 307, Los Angeles, CA 90012. 213/680-4462. FAX: 213/687-4848.

**New Angle Intermedia Video Festival.** May. New York. International showcase for experimental video under 30 minutes. For more information: Angle Intermedia, 300 Mercer St., #11N, New York, NY 10003. 212/228-8307.

**Atlanta Film & Video Festival.** May 13-17. Five-day festival with guest appearances by media artists. Presents cutting edge films and video. Committed to independent work. For more information: Image/Atlanta Film & Video Festival, Image Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., Suite M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309. 404/352-4254.

**American Film and Video Festival.** May 28-30. Congress Hotel, Chicago. Non-theatrical film and video festival featuring a wide range of topics from arts and culture, to health care, to business and industry. For more information: Kathryn Osen, American Film and Video Association, 920 Barnsdale Rd., Suite 153, La Grange Park, IL 60525. 708/482-4000.

**AFI/Los Angeles International Film Festival.** June 11-26. Laemmle Sunset Theatres, Los Angeles. Films selected by invitation only.



If you want to read more about women working in film and video, here's a list of articles from other publications. Angles will have more listings in the next issue.

**"Not My Twentieth Century"** by Margaret Tiberio, *Visions*, Summer/91. The author asks: "What would 'My Twentieth Century' look like if we each had an opportunity to present our own version? Many would be boring, but some would be surprising, perhaps unheard of. I'm thinking mainly of women's lives."

**"Imago"** by Elfrieda M. Abbe, *Visions*, Summer/91. Interview with filmmakers Pamela Robertson-Pearce and Anselm Spoerri about their documentary on artist Merit Oppenheim.

**"State of the Art: Art of the State?"** Interviews with Carol S. Vance and Guillermo Gomez-Pena about censorship, *Visions*, Summer/91. "In this culture we believe that the material body is where sexuality is located, and in an odd way, it's located in women's bodies more than in men's bodies. If you want to control sexuality, you really need to control women."  
— Carol S. Vance.

**"Foreign Parts"** by Kathleen Murphy, *Film Comment*, May-June, 1991. An analysis of "Closet Land" by Radha Bharadwaj and "Outremer" by Brigitte Rouan. "Both films are about grounded souls who struggle, sometimes to the death, to take wing into promise and pos-

sibility, and the sexual and real-world politics that hook and hold them down."

**"Cinematic Sisterhood"** by Greg Tate, *The Village Voice Film Special*, June, 1991. Interviews with Michelle Parkerson, Ayoka Chen-zira, Jackie Shearer, Daresha Kyi, Ellen Sumter, Dawn Suggs and Zeinabu irene Davis. "We need to take stock of those Black filmmakers, male, female, and indifferent, who serve us visions of Black life beyond homeys slangin' and gangbanging'."

**"Of Homegirl Goddesses and Geechee Women: The Afrocentric Cinema of Julie Dash"** by Greg Tate, *The Village Voice Film Special*, June, 1991. "On 'Daughters' it was about breaking through, doing something different. I mean, all the main characters are grounded in West African cosmology. The narrative is not driven by the Greek gods but Oshun, Oya-Yansa, Yemoja, Eshu-Elegba."

**"In the Company of Women"** by Marsha McCreadie, *The Village Voice*, June 4, 1991. Interview with director Cynthia Scott about her film "Strangers in Good Company." "'Strangers in Good Company' focuses exclusively on female geriatric concerns — not all somber ones — that surface while seven old women are accidentally stranded in a farmhouse outside Montreal. And it broaches some taboo topics about dying, illness, and the poor positioning of the elder woman, most frequently alone, in a Western society."

**"3rd Woman of 'Thelma and Louise' on the Sleeper Hit and Its Aftermath"** by Larry Rohrer, *The New York Times*, June 5, 1991. Interview with Callie Khouri, who wrote the screenplay for "Thelma and Louise." "'I did want the movie to be fun, and for people to laugh,' she said. 'But I also wanted, as a woman to walk out of the theater not feeling dirty and worthless, for a change, not feeling like I had compromised the character of women, because that is one area where women really get short-changed in movies. So many times you go to the movies, and what woman up there would you want to be? None of them.'"

**"Jane Campion's New Zeal and Style"** by Patrick Z. McGavin, *In These Times*, June 12-25, 1991. "She's one of the most challenging and brazenly unsentimental voices to emerge on the international front in some time. And with so many old standbys (Fellini, Kurosawa, the Taviani brothers) either stalled or drifting into American-financed co-productions, her voice is desperately needed."

**"An Aficionado of Animation"** by Robert W. Butler, *Kansas City Star*, July 21, 1991. Interview with Blake Vonder Haar, a distributor of the "Festival of Animation." "I do real intensive marketing. I try to convince people it's a special event, not just a movie." —Vander Haar.

**"An Eye for Detail and a Film of Her Own"** by Susan Linfield, *The New York Times*, Aug. 18, 1991. Interview with Kristi Zea, director of "A Domes-

tic Dilemma" for HBO, a drama about a marriage that is crumbling because of a drinking problem. **"Juliet Bashore: Kamikaze Filmmaking"** by Holly Willis, *Visions*, Fall/91. An interview with Juliet Bashore whose work includes "Kamikaze Hearts," a documentary about two lesbian pornography stars. "These are stories about people who are living their lives very intensely in ways that most people don't have the nerve to, and they are also people that a lot of people would never communicate with."

**"Women Making Films & Video"** by Elfrieda M. Abbe, *Visions*, Fall/91. Festival report on 1991 Women in the Director's Chair Film & Video Festival.

**"'Dogfight' Wears Camouflage"** by Caryn James, *The New York Times*, Sept. 15, 1991. Essay on Nancy Savoca's "Dogfight." "Forget the marines, Nancy Savoca's movie is really about being a plain Jane."

**"A Wild Desire to Be Absolutely Fascinating,"** a review of Katharine Hepburn's "Me: Stories of My Life" by Frank Rich, *The New York Times Book Review*, Sept. 29, 1991.

**"The Life and Loves of Marguerite Duras"** by Leslie Garis, *The New York Times Magazine*, Oct. 20, 1991. "The French author and filmmaker still ventures where panic and danger mingle with eroticism and death."



## Davis

*Continued from page 9*

**AF:** You told me one of the things you changed was making Yasmine a single mother. I know that when a child is young, and you are solely responsible, it can be very lonely and demanding. Why is that important to the story?

**ZiD:** Two reasons. First, so many of my friends are Black single mothers, and second, Asma, the woman I wanted to portray Yasmine, is a single mother. She's not an actress, and I thought it would be easier for her to relate to the character. So her son is played by her son.

**AF:** So while you were working on the script, you had already decided Asma should play Yasmine. Why was she so important to the story?

**ZiD:** We are old friends, like sisters. We were in Kenya together. But one of the important reasons was that she has dreadlocks. Having been a woman who has worn her hair in dreadlocks for the past seven years, there were very few, if any, examples of women having their hair styled in dreadlocks in the mainstream when I started working on this film in '88. Now there seems to be almost an explosion from music videos to TV commercials. But still to my knowledge, we haven't seen a Black female lead who has long dreadlocks, so this must be a pioneer-

ing effort. It was important that this woman be very comfortable with herself, with her hair. I've always admired how careful and confident she is with her hair.

The other thing about dreadlocks is that I spend a lot of screen time on Yasmine washing her hair. I personally have had too many people ask me, "Do you wash your hair?" Not "How do you wash your hair?," which is insulting. So America could be educated about how someone with dreadlocks washes their hair. This is strictly idiosyncratic, so-called cultural politik.

**AF:** Do you want to mention any future plans?

**ZiD:** I've some other ideas, another piece connected to "Cycles," "A Period Piece" and "A Powerful Thang." One thing I would like to add — I would love to work with a woman cinematographer on a future project. I'm just putting the word out.

*Ann Filenmyr is an assistant professor of communications at Antioch University in Yellow Springs, Ohio.*

## WIDC

*Continued from page 12*

"A Powerful Thang," by Zeinabu irene Davis, traces an African-American couple's search for intimacy and friendship (Davis will attend). (New Works by Black Women)

Black Mosaic, a special program of films and videos by African-American women, will include a retrospective of works by Camille Billops. Among them will be her latest work, "Finding Christa," about an adopted daughter who finds her natural mother, in this case Billops. In "Suzanne, Suzanne," Billops docu-

ments her niece's drug addiction and the effects on family members.

The program schedule follows:

**March 1** — "(In) Visible Women" by Ellen Spiro and Marina Alvarez, the story of three women with AIDS. Screening will benefit the Chicago Women's AIDS Project. 3 and 5 p.m., The Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton. Suggested donation, \$10.

**March 5** — Native American and First Nation Peoples, 6:30 p.m., Filmmakers. Transitions, 9 p.m., Filmmakers.

**March 6** — In The Life: New Works by Black Lesbian Film and Video Makers screenings and panel discussion (Michelle Parkerson, Cheryl Dunye and Yvonne Welbon), 6:30 p.m., Filmmakers. Politics, 9 p.m., Filmmakers.

**March 7** — Student, 2:30 p.m., Filmmakers. Growing Up in America, 5 p.m., Filmmakers. Sexuality, 9:30 p.m., Filmmakers. Mosaic in Black: Camille Billops Retrospective (Billops will attend), 8 p.m., Film Center.

**March 8** — Action, 1:30 p.m., Filmmakers. Experimental Films, 8 p.m.,

Filmmakers. Mosaic in Black: New Work, 6 p.m., Film Center. Classics, 8 p.m., Film Center. Panel of Black Women Filmmakers — Gloria J. Gibson-Hudson, Camille Billops, Zeinabu irene Davis, Michelle Crenshaw, 4 p.m. Film Center.

Tickets at Filmmakers, \$6 per program for non-members; \$5 for members. Art Institute Film Center tickets, \$5 per program for WIDC members and general public; \$3 for museum members. Festival passes: \$20 for members; \$25 for non-members. For more information: WIDC, 312/281-4988.



## Gold

*Continued from page 4*

One of the events that aided Greycat's promotion of the film was the Beacon Press reprinting of Ruthanne Lum McCunn's book, "Thousand Pieces of Gold," on which the movie is based. The book was available at several screenings. To add another layer of promotion and advertising, the Whittens contacted book and movie critics in cities where the movie played.

Other cities where the film played include Minneapolis, Minnesota; Portland and Salem, Oregon; Missoula, Montana; Boise, Idaho; Berkeley, Palo Alto, Santa Cruz, Menlo Park, San Jose, Sacramento and Larkspur, California; Las Vegas and Reno,

Nevada; Austin, Texas; Spokane, Washington; New York, Chicago and Milwaukee. It was scheduled to open in 15 more cities in January. As of this printing the box office receipts were about \$800,000.

Part of the film's success can be attributed to Greycat's careful handling and attention to detail. The Whittens were responsible for making the 20 prints currently in circulation, hiring a public relations firm, advertising campaigns, putting together press kits with stills, producing trailers and organizing special screenings.

Based on "Thousand Pieces of Gold" and "Henry the Serial Killer," a film Greycat distributed earlier, the company has become known

for successfully handling unconventional material.

The Whittens moved to Las Vegas 1989 after working in Hollywood

without much success as distributors. But since the move it's been "onward and upward," said Suzanne.

## Feed Back

*Continued from page 3*

honesty and sincere articulation.

We are now accepting work from media-makers from all (side) walks of life, and are compiling programs using the curatorial instincts outlined above. We hope to show everything we receive but, of course, there is a limit given our intent and purpose in creating the show.

We are also interested in working with local festivals of alternative media to showcase works from those festivals. Another avenue for further development is in the production of shows. We have studio and portable facilities available to us at Chicago Access Corporation. Any interested producer could submit a proposal to us to work with us in the creation of a program. The programs could be any format, except TALK SHOWS.

If you are interested in participating in the creation of "Feed Back," we welcome your support. We also welcome your videotapes!

*For more information: Feed Back, Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60620. 312/243-0798.*

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